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ABSTRACT

State education in Great Britain is monolingual. With increases in immigration and the proliferation of bilingual non-state schools, the desire of minority groups to be educated bilingually is growing apparent. The author of this article begins with a discussion of the relative merits of bilingualism by reviewing the research that has endorsed arguments on both sides of the issue. He then reviews bilingual education programs in other countries with an emphasis on the political and attitudinal contexts of different programs. In the final section, the author encourages British schools to set a long-term goal of full bilingual education (students become both biliterate and bilingual and are taught all subjects in both languages) and establishes six criteria by which changes in the schools can be assessed. (MK)

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BILINGUALISM IN EDUCATION

JOHN WRIGHT

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BILINGUALISM AND SCHOOLING IN MULTILINGUAL BRITIAN

This article is not about bilingualism in Wales, but about the bilingualism of Britain's minority ethnic groups - mainly the Asian, Greek, Turkish and Chinese. Yet this letter, from a Welshman, serves as an apt introduction because it not only reminds us that bilingualism is more than simply an educational or linguistic issue, but also because it reminds us of just how endurable and persistent a human phenomenon bilingualism is:

Gwent
October '77

Sirs,
I have just read in the press about proposals to introduce Asian languages into schools in England. I can not tell you how shocked I am. I always assumed that these children would naturally be receiving part of their education in their own languages. This is a much greater test of the liberal instincts of our society than anti-discrimination laws. Please find enclosed a donation of five pounds.

Yours
P.S. I write as someone who grew up in Wales and who, at the age of fifty, has never heard his parents say one word of English to each other.

"A comparatively recent development in Britain," begins a report published in 1975 by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching,

"... is the rapid increase because of immigration, in the number of native speakers of many languages. No reliable statistics are available in the numbers of Punjabi, Gujerati and Hindi speakers in our midst, nor of those who have Greek, Turkish or Cantonese as their mother tongues. We know, however, that they form part of the permanent population, and provide not only largely untapped resources for learning, but virtually unexplored and undefined

demand for teaching these languages, often in schools but also in further education....But as yet there is little indication that these are being seriously studied, in spite of much ostensible recognition given to the notions of multicultural and multiracial education."Immigrant" languages are still virtually ignored in school...."(1)

It is a fact that a large number of children, born in Britain grow up learning as a first language a language other than English. And from the proliferation of voluntary aided mother-tongue schools (2), it is obvious that there exists within the minority language communities a lively determination that this situation will continue - that the languages which families brought with them to Britain will be maintained in Britain.

The man from Gwent was right to be shocked: it is time that we in schools acknowledge the fact that we serve communities which are, and seem likely to remain, multilingual.

At present, state education in Britain, is, for all students, monolingual education. In this article I hope to raise as important issues for debate: our attitude towards our pupils' bilingualism and, following on from this, the type of bilingual education programme which may best serve the needs of our multilingual society. My argument falls into three sections -

First:	Is bilingualism good or bad?
Second:	What can we learn from Bilingual Education programmes in other countries?
Third:	What should we do in Britain?

BILINGUALISM - IS IT GOOD OR IS IT BAD?

First, what is bilingualism? The traditional definition - equal and advanced mastery of more than one language - has been rejected by linguists because in practice it rules out most of the world's naturally bilingual peoples, for example in Asia, Africa and Central Europe. Fishman offered as an alternative definition:

> "...demonstrated ability to engage in communication via more than one language." (3)

But this is so broad that it probably rules in most of the world's naturally monolingual people: most of us can communicate something or other in a language other than our mother-tongue, even if it is just on the level of au revoir.

Mackey argued that the search for a consistent definition, of what constitutes bilingualism was based on a false and dangerous premise, viz. that there actually is one state of mind called bilingualism and that it influences the mental lives of all bilinguals in the same way. In fact, Mackey stressed, there is an enormous variety of bilingual learning situations, and in each situation a different combination of factors - cognitive, affective, educational and social - is likely to be operative. (4)

For present purposes it will be sufficient to opt for a broad definition like "being reasonably skilled in the use of more than one language", but, more relevant that the debate over definitions is the question of society's attitude to bilingualism .....

Linguists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries seem to have looked askance at bilingualism. In 1899 Henry Sweet wrote:

> "No phenomenal linguist has ever produced real literature, nor, what is more remarkable, ever made any great contribution to the science of language." (5)

In 1920, Jesperson suggested that a bilingual child learns neither of his languages as well as if he had limited himself to one, and he believed that the brain effort required to learn two languages must surely hamper learning in other subjects. He quoted with approval Schuchardt's maxim that bilingual man has two strings to his bow, both rather slack. (6)

The introduction of standardised I.Q. tests in the 1920's gave investigators what seemed to be a straight-forward means of discovering if bilingualism did, in fact, affect intellectual ability. What emerged from the early research was that bilingual children scored less well on tests of verbal intelligence.

In addition to the apparent intellectual handicap, it has also been suggested that bilingualism is linked with a high incidence of maladjustment, and that ".. the strain of someone belonging and yet not fully belonging, to two communities, the conflicts of behaviour...may well bring out undesirable personality traits" (7)

Statements like that of Sweet's can easily be dismissed: many writers have not only been bilingual, but have chosen as their literary medium a language other than their mother-tongue, and have been successful - Conrad, Beckett, Koestler, Nabokov, for example. And the finds of much of the early I.Q. research into bilingualism has subsequently been brought into question. In 1962, Peal and Lambert pointed out that quite often in the early research there had been no attempt to control for factors such as socio-economic status. So, for example, the I.Q. scores of bilingual children attending run-down schools in poverty stricken areas would be compared to those of monolingual children attending school in afluent middle-class areas. The early researchers also seemed to have ignored the question of the bilingual's degree of knowledge of his second language. For example, scores on verbal intelligence tests were often obtained by testing bilingual children in their second, weaker language. These scores were then compared to those of children who had been tested in their first, and only, language. (8)

More recent studies of the effect of bilingualism on intellectual development suggest that becoming bilingual, either as the result of school or home experience, can have positive influences on aspects of congitive development. Several of the hypotheses put forward to explain this influence refer to what the Russian psychologists term "the process of objectification" (9). This parallels what Margaret Donaldson, writing about the cognitive development of monlingual children, has called "disembedding language":

> "The normal child comes to school with well established skills as a thinker. But his thinking is directed outwards and to the real, meaningful, shifting distracting world. What is going to be required for success in our educational system is that he should learn to turn language and thought in upon themselves. He must become able to direct his own thought processes in a thoughtful manner. He must become able not just to talk but to choose what he will say, not just to interpret but to weigh possible interpretations. His conceptual system must expand in the direction of increasing ability to express itself. He must become capable of manipulating symbols...Now the principle symbolic system to which the pre-school child has access is oral language. So the first step is conceptualising language - becoming aware of it as a separate structure, freeing it from its embeddedness in events .."
> (10)

Donaldson believes that the reading teacher's methodology is important here. The process of teaching reading can, she claims, "...enhance the child's reflective awareness of language as a symbolic system" (page 90). This is the same claim which has been made for many years in relation to learning a second language in childhood. Vygotsky, for example, believed that being able to express the same thought in two different languages would lead the child to"....see his language as one particular system among many, to view its phenomena under more general categories, and this leads to awareness of his linguistic operations" (11). Imedadze has argued that second language learning, even

on the mundane level of simply learning a few different names for simple every-day objects, enhances development through this particular stage of conceptualisation: "..when the child first encounters the fact that an object can have two names, a separation of object and name begins. A word, when freed from its referent, can easily become the object of special attention". (12)

Research findings would seem to back-up these claims. In 1972, for example, Ianco and Worrall discovered that bilingual children were more sensitive than monolingual children to semantic relations between words, and were more advanced in realising the arbitrary relations between words and objects. Monolingual children were found more likely to interpret the relationship in acoustic rather than semantic terms. (13)

But it is necessary to remember that, despite the swings in academic opinion - sometimes damning, sometimes acclaiming bilingualism - the rich and powerful people of the world have always favoured bilingualism. Families secure in their social, economic and political power always seem to have desired for their children an educational and cultural exposure in addition to that afforded them by their own mother-tongue and milieu. Advantaged groups, in the Ancient and the Modern Worlds, in the East and in the West, have seen their own bilingualism as something good, as something elitist. (14)

Doubtless, if asked to rationalise this attitude, the rich and powerful would use arguments similar to those commonly used to justify foreign language teaching in secondary schools viz. that to learn a language in addition to the first acquired involves an exposure to a unique learning opportunity: the opportunity to experience at first-hand the language and culture of a civilisation other than the one which has moulded your own world view: to step outside your own world view is to understand better the forces which have shaped yourself and which shape all men; it is to begin to understand the reasons for the diversity of mankind, and paradoxically, at the same time to come to an understanding of the one-ness

of humanity. Skilled bilingualism offers real rewards, it is argued, in terms of access to different kinds of relationships with different kinds of people; interaction within different kinds of social structures; access to the literary and artistic heritage of two cultures rather than just one.

Yet there seems no logical reason why this kind of justification should not hold true for all bilingualism, for bilinguals per se. . It is, of course, "folk" bilingualism - the bilingualism which results from ethnic groups being in contact with one another, in a situation where the poor and/or minority groups have to learn the language of the majority group in order to survive, that has for the most part been associated with negative cognitive and emotional consequences.

So rather than asking questions about what bilingualism is, as a state of mind, it is more to the point to ask about society's attitude to the group that is bilingual. Writing about conditions in America, Fishman commented:

> "...the bilingualism of hundreds and thousands of Americans is a liability in their lives, and this for no reason inherent in the nature of bilingualism per se. It is our treatment of bilinguals and bilingualism that brings this sad state of affairs into being." (15)

Similarly, the bilingualism of hundreds of thousands of British children may be a liability to them in schools simply because it is not being put to use. This can result in part from the belief that by banishing the first language from the learning situation the child will learn English more efficiently and speedily, and will in turn make swifter general educational progress. Although well-meaning, this view ignores the possibility of making positive use of the "other-language" skills which the child brings to the learning situation, and denies even the chance of discovering if such skills can be used to further general educational progress without hampering the process of learning English.

It can also be argued that by ignoring the first language skills of minority group children the school inevitably signals to those children, and to the majority group children the irrelevance, uselessness and low status of the other languages themselves. This has obvious implications for the self-perception of minority group children, and for the way these children are regarded by the majority group.

Leaving this second issue on one side, the starting point for the following section is the view that - if for no reason other than that of exploring the learning potential which skill in a language other than English represents - we should begin to question our attitudes to our pupils' and students' bilingualism. It is time to ask questions about bilingual education, and to look at what has been happening in other countries. It is time to consider whether or not there is a type of bilingual education which would make better use than is made at present of the talents which many of our students bring to the learning situation.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION: WHAT HAPPENS IN OTHER COUNTRIES?

Almost all of the research into bilingualism has been either psychologically or linguistically orientated. In considering the question of bilingual education, however, it is necessary to supplement these approaches with a more sociologically based perspective - one which is able to take into account the political and attitudinal factors which make up the context within which bilingual education programmes function. And before attempting to describe a programme which could operate within our own school system, it is necessary to look abroad. For the Welsh experience and the E.E.C. pilot projects in Manchester and Bedford simply do not provide a broad enough framework for a serious evaluation of the options open to us ...

The work of Fishman and other American and Canadian sociolinguists (John, Horner, Macnamara) is relevant: partly because it is sociological in orientation and international in scope; partly because it includes serious evaluation of bilingual programmes which have been set up in the USA to meet the needs of minority group children living in poor districts, and such programmes may well have relevance for minority group children growing up in the poorer parts o our British cities.

In 1972-3 International Study of Bilingual Secondary Education collected and analysed information from over 1,200 schools in over a hundred countries. This research was extended by Fishman, and an account of the results written up in: "Bilingual Education - An International Sociolinguistic Perspective" (16). On the basis of this research, Fishman defined four basic types of bilingual education programme, and he has evaluated them from the point of view of their educational and societal goals. The four types are:

One: Transitional Bilingualism. These are programmes where the child's first language is used in the early school grades along with the language which is the main medium of instruction, but only up until the point in time when skill in the medium of instruction enables it to be used alone.

Two: Monoliterate Bilingualism. These programmes encourage the development of oral/aural skills in both the language of the home and the medium of instruction, but literacy skills are developed only in the language which is the medium of instruction.

Three: Biliterate Bilingualism (partial). In this kind of programme the goal is literacy in both the medium of instruction and the home language. But mother-tongue literacy skills are restricted in use in schools to studying particular subject matter - usually the literature and arts of the culture associated with the mother-tongue. The main medium of instruction is the language through which literacy is exercised in the technological, science and economic subjects.

Four: Biliterate Bilingualism (full). In this kind of programme all students develop skills in both languages and both languages are used equally as mediums of instruction in all subject areas.

Fishman considers that transitional bilingual education programmes (type one) are characteristic of a compensatory approach to the education of linguistic/cultural minority group children. Bernstein's 1970 definition is a convenient enough starting point for working out what Fishman means by this.

> "Compensatory education implies that there is something lacking in the family and so the child. As a result, the children are unable to benefit from schools....It follows then that the school has to compensate for the something missing in the family and the children are looked upon as 'deficit systems'." (17)

Early practical interpretations of this approach consisted of attempts to provide a "cultural injection" as an antidote to the effects of poverty - and the earlier this happened it was thought, the greater the chance of the treatment being successful. Headstart programmes, for example, typically sought to give children from minority group and/or working class homes a white middle-class type nursery experience, with an emphasis on middle-class culture norms.

As a refinement of the "cultural antidote" approach, some educationalists developed the view that it was the language element within such programmes that was crucial. Bereiter and Engelmann were the best known exponants of this view which can be summarised briefly as follows:

> "Assuming that the poverty child lags behind his middle-class counterpart in preparation for school, then a pre-school compensatory programme will have to have the child learning at an even greater rate because his problem is essentially one of "catching up". Accordingly, a pre-school programme would concentrate directly upon the most critical of skills needed for school, and this is language." (18)

So compensatory education became associated not only with a notion of "cultural deprivation" but also with the notion of "linguistic deprivation", and the early writings of Bernstein encouraged this conceptual extension. But the underlying assumption remained: that what the school system provides in the way of organisation, curriculum and methodology is appropriate, and should therefore remain unchanged. If children from non-white or minority language group or working class families seem to be failing to derive full benefit from what the school system offers, then the solution is to modify the children, to pre-train them in order that they closer approximate the middle-class white children, who, stereotypically, succeed in schools as they are.

Opposition to the compensatory approach and its notion of the child as a deficit system grew in the mid-sixties. Researchers such as Labov and Baratz and Baratz are the best known early attackers of the compensatory approach. Their arguments can be summarised as follows:

> It is erronerous to regard linguistic and cultural difference in terms of deficit...It is this attitude itself which is the cause of educational disadvantage. It is not a question of the child being unsuited to or unready for the curriculum and methods of the school,but vice versa. The linguistically and/or culturally different child has progressed quite normally up until the entry to school, and the school should be able to build upon and develop the knowledge and skills which the child brings with him/her - and not insist on starting from scratch.

This approach obviously extends beyond a debate on teaching method - the point ultimately made is that schools must undergo a total reorientation in order to be able to serve the needs of a polycultural and polylingual society.

A transitional bilingual education programme seems, at first sight, to be indicative of a school's being prepared to change, and being prepared to acknowledge and use the language skills which children bring to school with them. In what way is this representative of the compensatory approach,then? Fishman has three answers - First, such programmes are compensatory because the change made (i.e. the use of the first language) is limited to an "induction" period; Second,because the motivation behind the use of the first language is to arrive at"....the state of English monolingual education normality just as soon as is feasible without injuring the pupil or arousing the community" (19); Three, because the effect of such programmes is to promote language shift not language maintenance i.e. the speedy dropping of the mother-tongue within the educational context and the permanent shift to the main medium of instruction.

An example of such a programme is described in a grant proposal from Las Cruces (N.M.) School District No.2. in support of their Primary Programme for Bilingual Students. The three primary objectives for the programme are stated as:

> "...to increase the achievement of Spanish speaking youngsters: to involve the parents of Spanish speaking students in the educational programme as advisors and learners, thus enriching the home environment of the child.....; to determine whether Spanish speaking youngsters achieve more in a programme that uses both Spanish and English as mediums of instruction than programmes which use just English." (20)

In Britain, the ILEA's Bilingual Education Project, which aims at producing texts in foreign languages for the use of minority group students until they have acquired enough English to be able to learn solely through that medium, is an example of the same type of programme. There is no intention in either of these programmes to measure or improve performance in the minority group languages, or to continue its use beyond the point at which shift to English as the medium of instruction can be made.

Using bilingual education programmes for compensatory purposes has, Fishman points out, as well established precedent...

"...in other climes and in other centuries, but most particularly in Europe since the Reformation, wherever the expansion of educational opportunity (or obligation) was stymied by the fact that the official language of education was not always the mother-tongue of students new to the education system. In such circumstances, whether in early-modern France or Germany, in turn-of-the-century or in recent-day Yucatan, Manila, or Moncton, the same claim has been advanced: start the learner off in the language he knows best. The more rapid progress made as a result, insofar as developing learning confidence and satisfaction is concerned, will then pay off in terms of much

more rapid progress when the majority language is turned to... A serious evaluation of (this) claim is still to come, if by serious we mean an opportunity to disentangle the mother-tongue effect per se from the social, cultural, economic, linguistic, and educational contexts in which it is necessarily embedded. What little research there has been in connection with this claim indicates that there are certainly circumstances under which it is supported,* but that, on the whole, bilingual education is too frail a device, in and of itself, to significantly alter the learning experiences of the minority-mother-tongue-poor in general or their majority-language-learning-success in particular. It is of course true that foisting a language other than their own upon such children is equivalent to imposing an extra burden upon those least capable of carrying it. However, precisely because there are so many other pervasive reasons why such children achieve poorly the goals of majority - oriented and dominated schools (and society), removing this extra burden above - and leaving all else as it was - does not usually do the trick, particularly when the teachers, curricula, and materials for blingual education are as nonoptimal as they currently usually are. My own feeling is that just as there is no simple school based solution to the learning

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*Similarly there is evidence to support the claim that compensatory programmes involving direct and intensive language tuition do effect improvement, for example, in verbal I.Q. scores and in attention span (22). But in a general review of compensatory language programmes Ingram concluded that in many the success is short-lived: "...6,12,18 months after the programme has ceased, there may no longer be a significant difference between participating and non-participating children." (23)

problems of the alienated - in general, we cannot and should not expect bilingual education to provide such a solution for the non-English-mother-tongue-alienated-poor in particular." (21)

Macnamara has supported Fishman's reservations on the effectiveness of transitional bilingual education programmes on their own...He believes that it is both simplistic and unfair to suggest that, in themselves, such programmes can radically enhance the educational opportunities of minority group students - given all the other society imposed disadvantages. Macnamara's main criticism, however, is that in addition to giving minority members false expectations, compensatory bilingual education programmes are counter-productive in that they forge the link in the minds of the majority group (including majority group educatiors)between bilingualism and poverty...as if there was something intrinsically disadvantaging about having skills in a language other than English. This link,Macnamara complains, is even made by the act of government which facilitates the funding of bilingual education (Title VII of the Bilingual Education Act)

> "Title VII funding is in the spirit of operation Headstart. Twice in the Act and once in the guidelines we are told explicitly that the funding is for districts where the people are poor, and, the Act clearly indicates, where the children do poorly at school...the whole tone of the funding creates the impression that French or Spanish.... are unfortunate maladies which the poor have contracted and cannot get rid of on their own." (24)

Monoliterate and Biliterate (partial) bilingual education programmes (types 2 and 3), Fishman argues, are not compensatory in approach. What advocates of these programme types propose, and according to Fishman have been proposing throughout the world and across the centuries, is not "compensation for individuals" but language/culture maintenance for the group as a whole. It is argued, however, that group/culture maintenance does serve the

individual by affirming him in her/his ethnic identity and thereby ensuring her/his greater potential for high academic performance. Fishman summed up the case as follows:

> "...A minority student who is confident of and recognised in his more intimate primary group membership relates more positively to both school and society (both of which are majority group dominated) and, as a result, profits more from schooling." (25)

An example of a Monoliterate (Type 2)programme would be that implemented by the El Rancho United School District in Pico Rivera, California. The programme is designed for pre-school children and the parents' and children's home language is used and developed throughout the course. However, the main focus of the programme is to develop literacy skills in English. There is no attempt or intention to develop literacy skills in the mother-tongue. In the short term such a course would encourage language maintenance, in the way that a compensatory type programme would not. But in a society such as the USA (or Britain), where literacy skills are rewarded, then in the long term such a programme would operate in favour of shift from the home language to the language associated with literacy i.e. the majority language.

An example of a Biliterate (partial) bilingual education programme is that implemented in Dade County Public Schools, Florida. Instruction in English language skills is provided, of course,but so is instruction in reading and writing Spanish. Spanish is the medium of instruction in lessons on Spanish literature and civilization. In all other curriculum areas the instruction is through the medium of English. A programme of this type obviously aims at language maintenance, and even language development - say in the fields of the arts and journalism, for example.

There are no programmes of this type in England, but in 1975 E.E.C. directive on mother-tongue teaching seemed to imply the setting-up of biliterate (partial) programmes...

"Member states shall facilitate within their territory the gradual adaption of the children of migrant workers to the education system and social life of the host country whilst ensuring that linguistic and cultural links are maintained between the children and their country of origin..."

Accordingly, Member States were to "make all the arrangements necessary" to ensure: A.free initial education in reception classes, "including, in particular, a crash course in the language, or in one of the official languages, of the host community"; B. free tuition in the culture and mother-tongue of the country of origin.

For the purposes of the Directive, the term "children of migrant workers" was to include the children of workers from non-E.E.C. countries.

So far, very little has happened in Britain as a result of the E.E.C. Directive. Yet it is true that the Directive has prompted a revival of interest in the question of mother-tongue teaching and bilingual education provision.

The Muslim Welfare Association seems to be the most vocal of Britain's minority group organisations on this issue, and argues the traditional line: group/culture maintenance ensures individual identity enhancement, and therefore ensures improved educational performance. This is an extract from a letter written to the Times Educational Supplement by the Secretary of the Muslim Welfare Association:

"Sir,
I was pleased to read of the EEC's decision that something must be done in education to ensure that immigrant children retain their cultural identity...These children must be taught in their own languages. They must learn about their cultural heritage. Research has shown that identity is crucial for intellectual,emotional and personality development. Unfortunately all local education authorities follow the policy of integration. The result is that immigrant children lose their identity,which also causes low

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academic achievement and emotional difficulties.... Arrangements must be made to teach them languages such as Urdu, Arabic,Bengali and Guejerati, and subjects such as Islamic history and culture These subjects must become part and parcel of the school curriculum... Muslims can retain their identity only if l.e.a.'s provide such facilities...

Yours,Iftikhar Ahmad. Muslim Welfare Association (26)

However,there would be an obvious danger in using the EEC proposals as the model for bilingual education for Britain's indigenous linguistic minorities. The intention of the EEC proposal is to ensure that migrant workers' children from within and without the Community receive an education which will fit them to return home and pursue higher education without disadvantage. As was pointed out in another letter to the Times Educational Supplement (coincidentally the same issue which contained Iftikhar Ahmad's letter), many people have grave apprehensions about...plans for the development of provision for European transient workers being extended to cover the needs of permanent settlers in Britain from Asia... The European view of migration travels badly across the channel and it is...dangerous to equate our situation with that of Germany,France and other member countries with"host economies." (27)

The apprehensions should be even graver in 1978. What the Muslim Welfare Association is arguing for almost certainly implies separate provision - segregation - and bilingual education on the EEC model - i.e. education which would fit students to return to the country of their parent's origin. Both of these features are entirely consistent with the National Front's pre-"repatriation" plans for minority group children....

The recently formed Co-ordinating Committee for Mother Tongue Teaching (CCMTT), like the Muslim Welfare Association, places the traditional emphasis on mother-tongue teaching of the kind that aims to enhance self-identity:

"Every child should have the right to full development of his/her existing skills and educational potential. The mother-tongue is an essential component of his/her identity and culture...This provision would help children maintain a consistent picture of themselves and their family and would decrease the gulf between home and school...." (28)

CCMTT aims to increase support for out-of-school voluntary provision, and to press for state funded provision of mother-tongue teaching, but the group has yet to develop a policy on bilingual education i.e.,teaching through the medium of the first language, rather than teaching the language per se.

So, although language maintenance programmes do not exist within the school system in England, the arguments in favour of them are becoming increasingly common which makes it relevant to review what the American sociolinguists Macnamara and Fishman have to say about the issues involved.

First, there is the question of whether or not a curriculum programme can help preserve a minority culture/language. Macnamara is certain that it cannot:

"It is a universal experience - and hence one of education's few truly scientific laws - that primary and secondary schools do not lead society. They are led by it. Only a decadent society relies on schools to maintain languages,morals,ethnic identity,religion. The fate of these is determined outside the schools, and the most that we can expect of schools is that they support society in its stated or unstated ambitions, or at any rate the nobler ones among them." (29)

He argues that group/culture maintenance programmes in the school curriculum are evidence of the determination of groups to survive as cultural units - as the political lobbying and organisational work involved in campaigning to get such programmes accepted and funded requires determination

and solidarity. John and Horner's brief account of the near twenty year struggle in the USA to win federal funding of bilingual education programmes, affirms Macnamara's point (30). But, of course, this is not the same as believing that programmes in themselves ensure cultural maintenance or affirm individual identity. It could be that bilingual education programmes function as the catalyst to organised community action for so long as their adoption by the state school system remains a campaigning goal. In this sense such programmes foster solidarity and group identification. They are trophies of past - but no guarantee of future - cultural solidarity. But even assuming that minority group/culture maintenance bilingual education programmes could secure group culture preservation and, through doing that, give individual students a "clearer picture of themselves", Fishman casts doubt on whether the final part of the equation could be made to work i.e.whether stronger self indentity would then ensure improved educational performance:

> "There is hardly any research evidence pertaining to such claims in conjunction with bilingual education, although the view itself is a long established one, particularly in the context of cultural pluralism and minority rights. In this context however it is primarily an article of faith, a moral and ethical position, a basic social right, and as such is not likely to benefit seriously from, or be much subjected to, objective and empirical research." (31)

Full Biliterate Bilingual education programmes (type 4) give parity of status and utility to both languages. All children receive tuition in and through both languages. Fishman terms this kind of programme "Enrichment" bilingual education; it is this kind of education programme which, according to the psychologically and linguistically oriented literature, is the most successful. However, as it is impossible for a society to give full backing to the use of two languages in all situations, such programmes - where they exist - are small-scale and usually experimental.

The bilingual education of the elite tends towards the enrichment model, rather than the compensatory or the group/culture maintenance type.

Programme success: The International Study of Secondary Bilingual Education investigated the extent to which different types of programmes in different social contexts could be judged as successful. The criteria of success included factors such as: percentage of pupils/students opting for courses; students' attitudes towards the two languages; student attainment in two languages. This information was related to wider societal factors and the following was the main conclusion to emerge:

> "..Not only is community consensus needed if bilingual education is to succeed, but...the help of the major language group is needed as much as, if not more than, the help of the minority language groups...The main trouble with foreign language learning thus far has been that it was an entirely school dependent affair with no out of school contextual significance whatsoever. Bilingual education that is left to the schools alone will have the same fate. The school can provide instructional power for bilingual education but not functional power for it. The latter must be provided by the community itself in terms of either dignifying its own diversity or the diversity of the international community...If the unmarked language community is apathetic or opposed, and if all the interest in bilingual education comes from oppressed minorities, bilingual education finds itself in a context of pressures, tensions, grievances, conflicts and cleavages."(32)

BILINGUAL EDUCATION - WHAT SHOULD WE DO IN BRITAIN?

Before attempting to suggest an answer to this question, it would be as well to summarise and draw together some of the main points to have emerged so far:

First: Bilingualism has in the past been regarded as either a disadvantage or an advantage, depending upon society's attitude to the group which was bilingual - which in turn has been linked to the socio-economic status and the ethnic origin of the group. There is evidence that bilingualism correlates with certain kinds of positive cognitive operations in early childhood; common-sense (together with the arguments put forward for foreign language learning in schools, and the fact that the elite have always valued it) tells us that being bilingual can increase our understanding of the world and of ourselves.

There are two options open to schools: they can exacerbate the problems caused by society's negative attitude by adopting a negative attitude themselves e.g. by pretending that the languages do not exist; or they can disassociate themselves as institutions from society's attitudes by acknowledging the existence of minority languages and by defining and developing a real educational purpose for them within the school system: i.e. defining and implementing some form of bilingual education.

Second: Bilingual education programmes, in themselves, cannot compensate for the disadvantages which, in our society, tend to follow when someone belongs to a minority linguistic group, a minority ethnic group, lives in an inner city area where housing is sub-standard and jobs are scarce, etc. Bilingual education must not be sold to minority groups as a panacea for all problems. Two counterproductive effects follow-on if this kind of promoting is done: first, the majority group associates bilingualism with disadvantage, and the attitudes which are at the root of the problem anyway, are strengthened; second, minority groups are led to expect more from educational reform than it can ever deliver - they are given expectations which the system, as it is at present, cannot fulfil.

Third: If, as international research has indicated, bilingual education depends for its ultimate success on the majority group adopting a positive attitude towards the minority languages and the people who use them... if an appreciation of diversity, rather than a fostering of division, is the prerequisite context for successful bilingual education...then what chance is there of successful bilingual education in Britain?

History has taught us how tenacious ethnicity, culture, language and bilingualism are, so there is no escaping the determinism of the first point summarised above. Britain is, and will continue to be, multilingual. Even if we, as teachers ignore it, it will not go away.
The determinism of the second and third points does have to be questioned, though, unless one is to accept that there is no way of improving upon the present situation.

Fishman's and Macnamara's view that bilingual education programmes could not, on their own, effect any significant improvement in the educational and occupational status of minority group members, reflects the growing awareness on the part of educationalists and politicans in Britain and the USA in the sixties that our schools were not going to lead society to the promised land of equality and justice for all. Equality of opportunity proved to be a more complex and elusive goal than had been thought.

The survey of 900,000 children in America for the Coleman Report (33), the Nation Survey of over 3,000 children in 171 schools in Britain undertaken for the Plowden Report, and the National Children's Bureau longitudinal study of 17,000 children...all found that manual-working class British children and American children, plus most ethnic minorities among American children, show lower attainment than their peers when they start school, and that these disadvantages persist. Not only that, the differences in performance actually increase throughout their school careers. Coleman summed up the implications of the evidence which emerged from the mass survey in the USA:

> "Schools bring little influence to bear on a child's achievement that is independent of his background and general social context." (34)

Indeed, as the studies seemed to indicate, school exacerbated the initial differences.

Macnamara's and Fishman's determinism has to be seen against the background of this research, and in part as a result of it. It has made them both impatient men: Macnamara is impatient with those who support the Bilingual Education Act with rhetoric which sets up expectations both of "language preservation, the strengthening of ethnic identity and the shoring-up of traditional values, approved behaviour and religious devotion," and at the same time, of "a good grounding in English, access to the educational ladder, hence to the power and wealth of the United States and...a chance to leave behind all that distinguished one from an Anglo-American."(35).

Fishman is impatient with all those who sell bilingual education as a miracle cure, the guarantee to increased social mobility for minority group people. He senses that in being oversold, bilingual education is being lined-up for ultimate rejection, for being written-off... And this has been happening in America after the compensatory education industry had burned itself out... when the politicians within and without education should have known better than to oversell school reform.

Major criticisms have been levelled at the large scale quantitative research work of the sixties. One is that standardised tests of attainment in reading and arithmetic were used, as well as intelligence tests, and all of these - we now know - contain cultural bias.

Another criticism, and this is the most telling one as far as responding to the results has been concerned, was that much of the research did not examine for differences between schools. And so whatever evidence there may have been that different kinds of school organisation, different kinds of teaching methodology could make a difference, was obscured.

There is evidence from subsequent research that some aspects of organisation and teaching style can make a difference: for example, non-streaming; teachers who expect children to succeed; a human school and classroom atmosphere; initiatives which involve parents; positive inter-racial relationships in

the classroom - all these have been found to correlate with high pupil performance (36).

Brian Davis has pointed out that much of the debate over equality in schools has so far consisted of "an exercise in making our conceptions of schooling fit neatly into our conceptions of class,economic and political systems." He points out how little we really know of how significant what goes on in the classroom may be:

> "In terms of sociological research, we know a bit about some aspects of school organisations, less about classrooms and almost nothing about content, and teaching methods as they relate to individual children's educational identity." (37)

Fishman and Macnamara are deterministic in this open-minded kind of way. They are both quite certain of what bilingual education cannot achieve; but they are both enthusiastic about what it may achieve, given support from the community and adequate funding.

If community antagonism can prevent bilingual education programmes being effective - as the international study indicated - then some will argue that there is no point in even attempting to establish a form of bilingual education in Britain, given the current climate of public opinion as reflected in the media. Racial conflict has complex causes, it will be argued: historic, economic, political; there is nothing a school can do because the roots of the situation lie outside the school's sphere of influence - in the community. The blind alley which this kind of determinism leads us into is that nothing to improve the situation within schools is even worth attempting until the situation outside schools has been improved.

The only way to break the grip of this kind of determinism is to accept the point - that racism does indeed have complex and political roots, but that it draws part of its strength from prejudice which is based on ignorance; and education has a limited, yet very real role to play in terms of dealing with the ignorance. Certainly the bilingual education programme planner has to beware of exacerbating existing tensions and divisions. But rather than being scared-off by racism the programme planner should see one of the aims of bilingual

education as being to promote a greater understanding and respect between peoples which will help undermine the prejudice on which racism feeds.

So, one of the measures of success of a bilingual education programme for Britain, then, must be the extent to which it can be seen to be fostering good inter-cultural relationships within the classroom and within the school. But it is not just student attitude which could benefit from bilingual education. The negative attitudes of teachers and educational administrators lie behind many acts of discrimination in the field of education, and discrimination on the basis of language is no less damaging than discrimination on the basis of skin colour or ethnic origin. Take the following case from America, for example:-

Under the headline - STARTLING ADMISSION ON I.Q. TESTS - the San Francisco Chronicle of January 4th 1970 reported that 45% of the elementary children with Spanish surnames who had been in classes for the mentally retarded in one school system had been found to be of average or above average intelligence when retested in Spanish. One child's I.Q. rose from 67 when tested in English to 128 when tested in Spanish. The average score gained by the 35 pupils who had been labelled mentally retarded as a result of tests given in their weaker language was 17 points.

The re-testing in Spanish only took place as the result of a Federal Judge ordering it to be done (after teachers, psychologists, and parents and students had filed affidavits).

The school system was reluctant to undertake the re-testing because it received $550 in government funds for each retarded child on role ...(39).

This may seem an extreme form of language discrimination. Yet it is interesting to speculate on what American educators think about our attitude to first languages in Britain. Not only do we not concede even a compensatory use of the mother tongue in British schools i.e. pupils/students learn in English or they do not learn at all depending on which local education authority a pupil student lives in she/he may well not find any systematic attempt being made to teach English....and may not be allowed into school until she/he is able to speak English.(39

So what should be our long term goal? Full Bilterate Bilingual Education (Type 4) programmes offer the best possible educational experience, and the best chance of success in both languages. But, as the international study disclosed, such programmes can not be supported by society for they depend on society according exactly the same function to both languages in all situations. If this is not possible in a country which has only two languages, like Switzerland, for example, it is certainly unthinkable in a country like Britain, where we have in excess of a dozen minority languages.

So there will always be a need for a lingua franca, a common language which all groups share. This will inevitably be the language of government and commerce. It will be the language which dominates at the higher educational levels. It is perverse to argue that that language could or should be any other than English. And so although literacy skills should be developed in more than one language, the importance of English language skills can not be played down. The ideal programme, then will approximate the partial biliterate types.

One feature of the full biliterate programme which should be included, however, is its offering the option of bilingualism to all students - and not restricting it to minority group students. Schools should aim at providing access to the languages of the community to the whole school population. So monolingual English speaking students will have the opportunity of choosing, as a language to study, and in addition to those offered in traditional modern languages departments, one of the languages of the immediate school community. All students will also have the option of learning about the culture and history of the civilization associated with the language through the medium of the language.

Some English speaking students, but obviously not all, will opt for minority languages in place of "foreign languages". The incentive will be personal and utilitarian. Learning a language of the community will open-up possibilities of greater communication and therefore greater friendship with individuals from minority ethnic groups. Such study could be utilitarian in that society will employ and reward individuals who are skilled bilinguals and who can facilitate cross-language communication: for both intra- and international transactions.

The learning of a community language for the English mother-tongue student will not be the abstract, academic and non-society related task which foreign language learning is often in danger of being. For the cultural resources of the target language will be immediately at hand, lending out-of-school reinfo cement for the school learning. The arts, the popular entertainments, the recreational activities, the styles of dress and food, the distinctive features of family group and social and political organisation...all these will be there in the catchment area of the school itself.

The kind of bilingual education programme we should work towards is one which is based, fundamentally, on offering choices:

First, choices to minority language/culture groups to maintain and develop their group languages and to learn and maintain their primary cultural traditions. Also choices to become fluent in the language and culture of the majority group. The balance between these two is a matter which pupils and students will decided for themselves.

Second, offering to the majority group pupils and students the choice of learning something of the language and background of the minority groups in the school and neighbourhood.

This may seem idealistic, even for a long term goal. Yet changes in our education system never occur at a stroke. They evolve, gradually....And changes are happening at the moment. For example a number of schools up and down the country are currently working on ways in which minority languages can be accorded status within the work of the class. Minority organisations are pressing for language maintenance provision, and the newly established C.R.E. seems to have made mother-tongue maintenance one of the priority issues as far as education is concerned.

In the present situation one of the most pressing needs is to open up debate on the direction in which these changes are evolving:

is it towards the compensatory goal?
or group/culture maintenance?

does it involve segregation and, if so, can we be sure that the risk involved in terms of divisions will be outweighed by the benefits in educational terms?

The value of having defined as a long term goal a particular type of bilingual education - albeit sketchy and idealistic - is that it provides a perspective from which individual innovations in the use of minority languages in the learning situation can be assessed. It makes it possible to draw up a set of criteria which can be used to evaluate changes according to whether they seem to be working with, rather than against, the grain of the long term changes which have been described as desirable.

Six such criteria are set out below, together with comment and examples of kinds of school work:

One: The motive for introducing minority languages into the learning situation must be utilitarian, not tokenist.

If children come to the classroom with a skill in a language other than English then that skill should be utilised for the benefit of the child's overall educational development. Utility is a key concept. Attempts to use languages in a non-utilitarian way i.e. displaying different scripts on noticeboards, having posters headed: "This is the way we say hello in all of our different languages", are of real but limited use. The danger is that they can too easily appear as a form of tokenism - to minority language children who, once they realise that they are not actually required to use their own languages will quickly lose interest in its' being displayed. And the majority language group will, after the initial novelty, simply assume that other people's languages are there for trivial purposes and are not real and valuable tools. Utilising the first language of pupils rather than just displaying them, is an important principle. Secondary sutdents using trial material produced as part of the ILEA's Bilingual Education Project soon got over the novelty of being able to opt for materials and texts in their own languages: the medium is not the message for very long. First language materials in the classroom have to compete with all of the other materials available - and if the content of the first language materials is either boring or trivial, their being

in minority langauges rather than English will not ensure their being used.

So, the languages, when used, should be used as the medium through which information of various kinds is made available and accessible: taped folk tales from different cultures in the listening corner of the infant classroom: books on countries or origin in languages of those countries in the junior school library; works of reference on subjects such as chemistry, biology, psychology etc in the departments in secondary schools, and in the libraries, a selection of literature in the languages of minority group students ...

Two: Integrate the work stimulated by minority language books/tapes/workcards etc with the mainstream of class activity.

If the work which is stimulated by the use of minority languages takes place in the classroom then not only will minority group students see their languages accepted within the classroom - the centre court of learning in the school - but the majority group students will have the opportunity of seeing that the languages are not just strange mutterings and squiggles ...that they have a real function for their users.

Three: Provide within the classroom the opportunity of developing and refining the skills of bilingualism - translation and interpretation - not only of language but of cultural experience.

It is not just knowledge of another language which represents the skill of bilingualism. Being able to relate one language to another, and interpret one culture to some one from another culture - these are the skills of bilingualism. They are skills which begin to develop as an inevitable consequence of trans-lingual and trans-cultural experience .....

Children who listen to folk tales in their own language can translate these when retelling them to their English classmates, or when they plan together with their classmates to act out the stores from the tapes. In the secondary

school various projects can be developed which utilise the skill of the bilingual children for the rest of the group...

For example, a comparative study of press handling of a story or an issue - a popular enough project within Humanties departments - can be broadened to take in a review of the way items are reported by the international press, or by the minority community foreign language press in this country. In addition to translating skills this could well raise as points of discussion the different kinds of bias that result from who a newspaper perceives its reader to be, and cultural comparisons in terms of the kind of stories which predominate in other people's popular press...

Four: Provide language learning opportunities, and the opportunity of becoming bilingual, to all students - even though a very small minority of English speaking students would take up the option.

Bilingual education materials in use in the mainstream classes will expose majority language students to the fact that other languages exist, are just as useful as English, and that to be able to use two languages is a skill which broadens the scope for work of those individuals who possess it.

In this situation some English speaking children will want to learn some or at least one of the languages "around" in the classroom. For pupils/students who want to do this there must be materials available. At infant level children are probably already teaching each other odd words and phrases. This work could be extended to include teaching each other the rhymes and songs which accompany playground games, for example.

At primary and secondary level a limited stock of basic language learning materials can be stocked in school libraries and modern languages departments: one tape and a workbook, just to start the student off....Obviously, at upper secondary level, the modern language department should attempt to provide facilities for learning minority languages at the same standard as they provide for the learning of the traditional foreign languages.

Five: Never segregate the minority group for mother-tongue learning....without explicity inviting all pupils/students to join the group.

Whatever language maintenance provision is offered within the school, always allow and encourage majority group pupils/students (and teachers) to join in. This means that the teachers employed, or who volunteer from the local community, to teach the groups, must be prepared for mixed ability teaching, for beginners as well as advanced students.

Six: Preserve and defend the minority group students right to choose for her/himself the balance of minority and majority group language and culture which best meets the desired identity of the individual.

Just as the bilingual education materials/courses are offered as options to the majority group students, so must they be offered as options to minority group students.

Conclusion

At the moment the pressure for bilingual education is coming from the minority groups. We must meet their demands and recognise the languages which their children bring to to the learning situation. But we must do this in a way which involves and educates majority group students as well: in a campaigning way which will familiarise them with the benefits of bilingualism; in a way which will expose them to the beginnings of the process of seeing the world through another person's language and culture.

If our first halting steps in bringing minority languages into the mainstream of the education system can meet these six criteria then they may help in the evolution of a bilingual education programme which would both utilise minority languages to the benefit of minority group students, and help, rather than hinder the growth of understanding and respect between the different peoples of our country.

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John Wright is director of the Bilingual Education Project at CUES. His article starts by asking 'Bilingualism is it good or bad?' and looks at some of the research which has endorsed arguments on both sides. It then looks at bilingual education in other countries and looks at the context of different bilingual programmes - political and attitudinal - which determine their character. It finishes by asking what should we do about bilingual education in Britain? .....

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